

VZCZCXRO7182
OO RUEHDE RUEHROV RUEHTRO
DE RUEHDS #1500/01 1361451
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 161451Z MAY 07
FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6147
INFO RUEHNR/AMEMBASSY NAIROBI IMMEDIATE 3013
RUCNIAD/IGAD COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUCNSOM/SOMALIA COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
RHMFISS/CJTF HOA PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUEKDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RHMFISS/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ADDIS ABABA 001500

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR AF AND AF/E
LONDON, PARIS, ROME FOR AFRICA WATCHER
NAIROBI FOR AMB. RANNEBERGER
CJTF-HOA FOR POLAD

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/16/2017

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [EAID](#) [ET](#) [SO](#)

SUBJECT: SOMALIA: ETHIOPIAN STATE MINISTER TEKEDA PROPOSES
MOGADISHU FOR VENUE OF JOINT APPROACH TO TFG

REF: A. ADDIS ABABA 1457

[1](#)B. ADDIS ABABA 1349

Classified By: ERIC WONG, DEPUTY POL-ECON COUNSELOR. REASON: 1.4 (B) A
ND (D).

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY. State Minister for Foreign Affairs Tekeda Alemu informed Ambassador on May 16 that the GOE believed that Mogadishu was the most effective venue for a joint U.S.-GOE approach to Somali President Yusuf on political engagement of Hawiye leaders, as it would provide an opportunity to hold critically needed follow-up meetings with Somali leaders from both the Hawiye and Hawiye sub-clans. An AMISOM base 19 kilometers north of Mogadishu is a possible venue. Tekeda also expressed concern that previous Ethiopian pressure on the TFG would be highlighted by meeting in Addis Ababa. Tekeda said the GOE considered it essential that Foreign Minister Seyoum personally participate in the meeting with Yusuf, due to his greater rapport with Yusuf. Tekeda affirmed that Ethiopia and the U.S. general shared common objectives with regard to the TFG, but expressed concern that publicly announcing that appointments of warlords such as Mohamed Dheere were temporary could render such appointees ineffective. Tekeda said replacing TFG Prime Minister Ghedi was only "a matter of timing." Lastly, Tekeda requested U.S. financial assistance to allow Ethiopian civil servants to travel to Mogadishu for 1-2 months to assist TFG administrators and build the TFG's capacity to provide critically needed government services. END SUMMARY.

MOGADISHU IS PREFERRED VENUE TO ENGAGE YUSUF AND HAWIYE

[1](#)2. (C) State Minister for Foreign Affairs Tekeda Alemu summoned Ambassador on May 16 to follow-up on May 11 (ref A) and May 15 (septel) discussions with AF DAS Swan and Counselor for Somali Affairs Amb. John Yates, respectively, on a joint U.S.-GOE approach to Transitional Federal Government of Somalia (TFG) President Abdullahi Yusuf. Minister Tekeda said the GOE believed it was imperative to conduct such a discussion in Mogadishu, rather than Addis Ababa or Nairobi, not only to deliver a stern message privately to Yusuf about enhancing political engagement of

the Hawiye clan, but also to allow for separate political meetings with Hawiye and Hawiye/Habr-Gedir/Ayr sub-clan leaders. Tekeda also expressed concern that meeting in Addis Ababa would only underscore previous GOE pressure on Yusuf. "We have been ordering him around too much," Tekeda said.

13. (C) Tekeda affirmed that the GOE considered it essential that Foreign Minister Seyoum Mesfin (not Tekeda) personally participate in the joint approach to Yusuf, due to Seyoum's greater rapport with Yusuf and the fact that Seyoum had previously had such discussions with Yusuf. As Tekeda planned to attend the upcoming May 20-21 COMESA ministerial in Nairobi, he noted that he and a U.S. interlocutor could approach Yusuf in Nairobi, if Seyoum and the U.S. met Yusuf later in Mogadishu. Citing security concerns about Mogadishu, Ambassador noted that an AMISOM base 19 kilometers north of Mogadishu may be preferable. Tekeda responded that security in Mogadishu was improving, but added that four Ugandans had been killed and five wounded in a May 16 landmine incident "along the coast" involving African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) forces.

REPLACING PM GHEDI IS ONLY "A MATTER OF TIMING"

14. (C) Tekeda underscored that Ethiopia and the U.S. generally shared common objectives with regard to the TFG; "minor differences related only to tactics or timing:
-- It was imperative that the TFG "win friends" and that "all legitimate grievances" be addressed, especially political representation. No matter the reality, Tekeda said, the TFG was perceived by Somalis as dominated by the Darod/Harti/Mijerteen sub-clan. While the need to engage the

ADDIS ABAB 00001500 002 OF 002

Hawiye had drawn much attention, the TFG needed to gain the support of the Darod/Merehan sub-clan as well.
-- Whereas the U.S. had proposed that the TFG publicly announce that the appointment of Mohamed Dheere as Governor of Benadir was only temporary (ref A), Tekeda questioned whether TFG appointees in such sensitive positions could remain effective if they were known to be departing soon. "Quiet assurances" may be preferable instead, he added.
-- The GOE agreed that TFG Prime Minister Ghedi had to be replaced, as his speech and actions undermined the very government "he is supposed to be leading." The only issue, Tekeda said, was when Ghedi would be replaced, as one needed to prepare for the reaction of Ghedi's Hawiye/Abgal sub-clan. "There is no love lost between us and the PM," Tekeda said.

FUNDS NEEDED FOR GOE CIVIL SERVANTS ASSISTING TFG

15. (C) Noting that the TFG lacked the capacity to provide governance and social services, Tekeda highlighted the critical need for U.S. financial assistance to fund Ethiopian civil servants who would "quietly" travel to Mogadishu for approximately two months, to advise the TFG on economics, social services, finance, customs collection, and other aspects of public administration. Ethiopia could not fund such experts, due to "foreign currency implications," Tekeda said, adding that the GOE sought approximately USD250,000. U.S. experts would also be welcome. Ambassador noted that previous discussions on security sector reform had involved training Somali military and security forces outside Somalia, and that the USG sought to provide USD40 million to Somalia for security and humanitarian assistance.

16. (C) Citing recent press reports that AU Commission Chairperson Konare had cautioned against the premature departure of Ethiopian troops from Somalia, Ambassador asked whether the GOE had requested financial support from the AU. Tekeda responded that AU funds had not even been released for

"regular" AMISOM forces: AU Peace and Security Commissioner Said Djinnit had informed FM Seyoum that while Italy's 10 million Euro contribution was now in an AU account, funds pledged by the EU remained blocked due to the EU's imposition of political conditions. Ambassador noted that EU Development Commissioner Louis Michel's comments on Somalia garnered public attention, because High Representative Javier Solana was less vocal.

17. (C) COMMENT. Minister Tekeda's request for U.S. financial assistance, to allow Ethiopian civil servants to provide temporary assistance to TFG administrators in Mogadishu, highlights that the GOE actively seeks to strengthen the TFG's capacity and is concerned about Somalia's rehabilitation and reconstruction following the ENDF's military intervention. The GOE shares the U.S. concern that TFG President Yusuf must take immediate and concrete steps to improve political accommodation of Hawiye sub-clans, and presented a non-paper with these views (forwarded to AF/E and Embassy Nairobi) to Amb. Yates on the previous day (septel).
END COMMENT.
YAMAMOTO